

## Sūrah Shūrā

Sūrah Shūrā was revealed in Makkah and has 53 Verses and 5 Sections

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

With the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful

### Verses 1 - 9

حَمْدٌ ﴿١﴾ عَسَقَ ﴿٢﴾ كَذَلِكَ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ ۚ  
 اللَّهُ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٣﴾ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ وَهُوَ  
 الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٤﴾ تَكَادُ السَّمُوتُ يَتَفَطَّرْنَ مِنْ فَوْقِهِنَّ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ  
 يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ  
 هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥﴾ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهُ حَفِیْظٌ  
 عَلَيْهِمْ ۗ وَمَا أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِوَكِيلٍ ﴿٦﴾ وَكَذَلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ قُرْآنًا  
 عَرَبِيًّا لِتُنْذِرَ أُمَّ الْقُرَىٰ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا وَتُنْذِرَ يَوْمَ الْجَمْعِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۗ  
 فَرِيقٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَفَرِيقٌ فِي السَّعِيرِ ﴿٧﴾ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَهُمْ أُمَّةً  
 وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِنْ يُدْخِلُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ ۗ وَالظَّالِمُونَ مَا لَهُمْ مِنْ  
 وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿٨﴾ أَمْ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ ۚ فَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْوَلِيُّ  
 وَهُوَ يُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٩﴾

Hā Mīm [1] ‘Ayn Sīn Qāf [2]. This is how Allah, the Mighty, the Wise, sends revelation to you and to those who were before you. [3] To him belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And He is the

High, the Supreme. [4] The heavens almost burst apart from their above side, and the angels proclaim the purity and praise of their Lord, and pray for the forgiveness of those on the earth. Be aware that Allah is the Most-Forgiving, the Very-Merciful. [5] And those who have adopted patrons instead of Him, Allah is on watch against them, and you are not responsible for them. [6] And thus We have revealed to you an Arabic Qur'ān, so that you may warn the town that is the mother of all towns, and those around it, and warn (them) of the Day of Gathering, about which there is no doubt\_\_ (when) one group of people will be in Paradise, and another group in the blazing Fire. [7] And had Allah willed, He would have made all of them a single group; but He admits whomsoever He wills into His mercy. As for the wrongdoers, they have neither a patron nor a helper. [8] Is it that they have adopted patrons instead of Him? So, it is Allah who is the Patron, and He gives life to the dead, and He is Powerful to do every thing. [9]

### Commentary

(Hā Mīm 'Ayn Sīn Qāf) Only Allah knows the meaning of these letters. The gist of the first five verses is as follows:

Just as this surah was revealed to the Holy Prophet ﷺ for the ascertainment of the religious principles and for other benefits, similarly Allah Ta'ālā, has been sending other prophets who preceded him. His Magnificence is such that whatever there is in the heavens and in the earth is His. He is the Supreme, the Most Magnificent. Even though some of the people of this world do not recognize and do not admit the greatness of His magnificence, yet the number of the angels in the heavens, who know Him and recognize His greatness, is so large that their load may, quite likely, cause the heavens to burst apart from above. A hadith narrated in Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah states that due to the large number of the angels, such crackling sounds are produced in the heavens as are produced when an excessive load is placed on something. And that is how it should be, because throughout the heavens there is not even a space of four fingers left vacant by angels who are in the state of prostration.

يَنْفَطَرْنَ (burst apart). It has been stated in the above hadith that the load of angels began producing such crackling sounds in the heavens as are produced when excessive load is placed on something. This tells us that angels have weight and this is not beyond reason, because it is

confirmed that angels also have physical bodies, even though very light in weight. And even light bodies add up to a considerable load when they are in huge numbers. (Bayān-ul-Qurʾān)

These angels in the heavens proclaim the perfection of their Lord and utter His praises. They also ask for forgiveness of the dwellers of this earth who do not give what is due to Allah's greatness, rather indulge in associating others with Him and in infidelity and hence become liable to suffer scourge. Their asking for forgiveness for disbelievers is for a limited period only and is a supplication that some severe worldly scourge may not befall the humans which may destroy all of them; their safety against ordinary punishments of this world and the real scourge of the Hereafter are not included in this supplication. And Allah, the Almighty accepts this supplication, and saves them from the general scourge in this world. It must be understood thoroughly that Allah and Allah alone is the forgiver and Merciful although this forgiveness of infidels is for a limited duration and is limited to this world only.

لِيُنذِرَ أُمَّ الْقُرَى (So that you may warn the town that is the mother of all towns) – *Umm-ul- Qurā* (mother of all the towns) means the origin and foundation of all habitations and cities which is Makkah. This title has been given to this city because, to Allah Almighty, it is more distinguished and more excellent than all other cities, habitations and the whole earth. Imam Ahmad has narrated in Musnad, with the authority of Sayyidnā 'Adiyy Ibn Ḥamrā' Az-zuhri رضي الله عنه that he heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ at a market of Makkah when he ﷺ was migrating from the city. He was addressing Makkah in the following words:

انك لخير ارض الله واحب ارض الله الى ولو لا اني اخرجت منك لما خرجت

“To me, you are better and dearer than the whole of Allah's earth; if I had not been expelled from your vicinity, I would never have left it of my own accord.” (At-tirmidhī, An-Nasa'ī, Ibn Mājah – rated as 'ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ' by Tirmidhī)

وَمِنْ حَوْلَهَا – means the suburbs in the neighborhood of Makkah Mukarramah; it could mean the neighboring Arab countries as well as the whole of the earth from east to west.

## Verses 10 - 12

وَمَا اخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِيهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَحُكْمُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ ۖ ذَلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبِّي عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ ﴿١٠﴾ فَاطِرُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَمِنَ الْأَنْعَامِ أَزْوَاجًا ۚ يَذُرُّكُمْ فِيهِ ۖ لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ ۚ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ ﴿١١﴾ لَهُ مَقَالِيدُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ بِيَسْطَرِ الرَّزْقِ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ ۚ إِنَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾

And (Say O prophet to your opponents,) "Whatever dispute you have in any matter, its judgment lies with Allah. That One is Allah, the Lord of mine; in Him alone I have placed my trust, and to Him alone I turn (in every matter)." [10] He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth. He has made for you pairs from among yourselves, and pairs from the cattle. He makes you expand in this way. Nothing is like Him. And He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing. [11] To Him belong the keys of the heavens and the earth. He extends provision for whomsoever He wills and straitens (it for whomsoever He wills). Surely He is All-Knowing in respect of every thing. [12]

## Commentary

وَمَا اخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِيهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَحُكْمُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ (Whatever dispute you have in any matter, its judgment lies with Allah. - 10) It means that the judgement in all those matters in which you dispute lies with Allah, because the sovereignty belongs to Allah only, as stated in another verse: *إِنَّ الْحُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ* (The Decision belongs to none but Allah - 6:57). The direction in many verses to obey Rasūlullāh ﷺ and in some verses to obey those in authority does not contradict the above, because the orders of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and of the authorities are also, in a way, orders of Allah. If the order has been received through 'wahy' or based upon the clear and definite verses (*nuṣūṣ*) of the Qur'ān and *sunnah*, then its being an order of Allah is obvious. And if the order is an '*ijtihad*' (inference) which in turn is based upon *nusus* of Qur'ān and *sunnah*, then also, in a way, it is an order of Allah. '*Ijtihadāt*' (plural of '*ijtihad*') of the '*mujtahidīn*' of the

ummah (those who are competent to interpret the Qur'an and Sunnah, and infer Islamic laws from them) on this basis, are included in orders of Allah. That is why the learned scholars have declared that the *fatwā* (ruling) given by a 'mufti' (A competent Islamic scholar) is to be taken as a part of the religious law by the common masses who do not have the ability to understand the Qur'an and the sunnah directly.

### Verses 13-15

شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ ۚ كَبُرَ عَلَى الْمُشْرِكِينَ مَا تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَيْهِ ۗ اللَّهُ يَجْتَبِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يُنِيبُ ﴿١٣﴾ وَمَا تَفَرَّقُوا إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ مِنْ رَبِّكَ إِلَى أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى لَفُضِّىَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُورِثُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِنْهُ مُرِيبٍ ﴿١٤﴾ فَلِذَلِكَ فَادْعُ ۖ وَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ۖ وَقُلْ آمَنْتُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ كِتَابٍ ۖ وَأُمِرْتُ لِأَعْدِلَ بَيْنَكُمُ ۖ اللَّهُ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ ۖ لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ ۖ لَا حُجَّةَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمُ ۖ اللَّهُ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَنَا ۖ وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٥﴾

He has ordained for you the same religion as He had enjoined upon Nūḥ, and that which We have revealed to you, and that which We had enjoined upon Ibrāhīm and Mūsā and 'Isā by saying, "Establish the religion, and be not divided therein." Arduous for the *mushriks* (polytheists) is that to which you are inviting them. Allah chooses (and pulls) toward Himself anyone He wills, and guides to Himself anyone who turns to Him (to seek guidance). [13] And they were not divided, in jealousy with each other, but after the knowledge had come to them. And had it not been for a word that had come forth earlier from your Lord (and was effective) until a specified time, the matter would have been decided between them. And those who were made to

inherit the Book after them are in confounding doubt about it. [14] So, (O prophet,) towards that (faith) invite (people), and be steadfast as you are commanded, and do not follow their desires, and say, "I believe in whatever book Allah has sent down. And I have been ordered to do justice among you. Allah is our Lord and your Lord. For us are our deeds, and for you, your deeds. There is no argumentation between us and you. Allah will bring us together, and to Him is the final return." [15]

### Commentary

شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا (He has ordained for you the same religion as He had enjoined upon Nūḥ-- 42:13) Allah Almighty's obvious and material blessings were stated in the previous verses. Stated from here are the inner and spiritual blessings. That is, He has blessed you with that very cogent and infallible religion which has been common between all the prophets ﷺ. Five of the prophets ﷺ have been mentioned in the verse. Sayyidnā Nūḥ ﷺ has been mentioned first, and our Prophet ﷺ in the end, while Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm ﷺ in the middle, because he is the father of prophets and was accepted as a prophet even by Arabs, despite their 'kufr' and 'shirk'. Sayyidnā Mūsā and 'Īsā ﷺ have been mentioned after him, because their followers were the ones who were present when Qur'ān was being revealed. These five prophets ﷺ are also the ones named in Sūrah Aḥzāb where the covenant of the prophets given to Allah is mentioned, the difference being that the last of the Prophet ﷺ has been mentioned before Sayyidnā Nūḥ ﷺ in Sūrah Aḥzāb, whereas Sayyidnā Nūḥ ﷺ has been mentioned before our Prophet ﷺ in the present surah. Perhaps this is to indicate that although the last of the Prophets ﷺ was born and sent as a prophet after all other prophets, yet he preceded everyone else in the originally destined (azalī) distribution of prophethood and messengership. This has been stated in a Ḥadīth: 'I preceded all the other prophets in the original creation and I am last of all the prophets in being sent.' (Reported by Ibn Mājah, Dārimī, from Bahz Ibn Ḥakīm, and rated as ḥasan'—See Mishkāh)

Now the question arises that the very first prophet is Sayyidnā 'Ādam ﷺ, but the mention of prophets ﷺ does not commence with his name. The reason is that Sayyidnā 'Ādam ﷺ was the first prophet to have come in this world, and although he has commonality in principles of

beliefs and important features of faith, yet during his period, no '*kufr*' and '*shirk*' had appeared in the people. Confrontation with '*kufr*' and '*shirk*' commenced with Sayyidnā Nūḥ عليه السلام, who is the first prophet to have faced such problems which were to be faced by later prophets, and as such Sayyidnā Nūḥ عليه السلام has been mentioned first. (Allah knows best).

أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ (Establish the religion, and be not divided therein. - 42:13). – This is an explanation of the preceding sentence which means that the '*dīn*' (religion) which is common to all the prophets and in which all are agreed has to be established and maintained; opposing this religion or creating differences in it is not only impermissible, but also liable to a destructive end.

### **Establishing the Dīn is obligatory Duty and Dissension in it is forbidden**

Two orders have been given in this verse – one, 'Establish the religion' and the second, 'Be not divided therein.' which forbids dissension in religion. This sentence is preceded by the word '*an*' which has been translated above as, 'by saying'. As such, this is an explanation of the word, 'ordained' occurring in the beginning. Therefore the word '*dīn*' (religion) in this verse means the same '*dīn*' which has been common between all the prophets, and which calls for adherence to the belief in Oneness of Allah, prophethood, the life after death, and to the principles of worship as *ṣalāh*, fasting, *ḥajj* and *zakāh*; it forbids theft, robbery, adultery, telling of lies, deceit, hurting others without a valid reason, breach of promise – all these have been common injunctions between all divine religions.

On the other hand, It is also proved through an unambiguous verse of the Qur'ān لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا (For each of you We have made a way and a method - 5:48) that there are ancillary differences in the details of the revealed laws of different prophets عليه السلام. In the light of all these facts taken together, it becomes clear that the order of establishing the religion and prohibition of dissension pertains to those divine laws which have been common and consistent in the codes of all the prophets عليه السلام – It is these injunctions in which creating differences is forbidden.

Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه states that one day Rasūlullāh ﷺ drew a straight line in front of us, and then drew other small lines on the

right and left of the straight line and said that the lines on the right and left were the ways invented by devils, and each of those ways is controlled by a Shaiṭān (Satan) who incites people to follow that path; and then, pointing towards the straight line, he said *وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ* (And this my path, straight. So follow it - 6:153.) (Aḥmad, An-Nasa'ī, Dārimī – Maḥzarī)

The straight path in the above simile means the same path of true 'dīn' (religion) which has been common to all the prophets ﷺ creating diversions in it is to create differences which is forbidden and an act of Shaiṭāns (Satan). Correct *aḥādīth* strictly forbid creating differences in such injunctions which are unanimously agreed. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said *من فارق الجماعة شبرا فقد خلع ربة الاسلام من عنقه* (Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd) meaning that the person who moves away even one span from the general body of Muslims has taken out the neck-band of Islamic beliefs from his neck. Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās ؓ has stated that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said *يَدُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْجَمَاعَةِ* (Tirmidhī, with rating as 'hasan') meaning that Allah's hand is upon the general body. Sayyidnā Mu'adh Ibn Jabal ؓ has narrated that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said that for humans, Shaiṭān (Satan) is like a wolf after a herd of goats, catching hold of the goat which has strayed away from the herd. Therefore you should stay with the general body, and do not separate yourself. (Aḥmad, as quoted by Tafsīr Maḥzarī)

### **Differences in the ancillaries between leading *Mujtahidīn* is not covered by the dissension forbidden in this verse**

It is obvious from the above that differences of opinions between leading '*mujtahidīn*' in ancillary matters where express injunctions are not found in the Qur'ān and *aḥādīth* or where there is an apparent contradiction between the *nusus* of the Qur'ān and *aḥādīth* and where opinions are bound to differ, do not bear any relation to the forbidden dissension. Such differences have been continuing since the days of the Holy Prophet ﷺ starting with the noble companions ؓ themselves and are considered to be blessings by the jurisprudents unanimously.

Establishing 'dīn' that has been obligated in this verse means to hold on to the rules of religion steadfastly, not to let any doubt or distrust creep into it and not to give it up in any case. (Qurṭubī)

*كَبُرَ عَلَى الْمُشْرِكِينَ مَا تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَيْهِ* (Arduous for the *mushriks* (Polytheists) is that to which you are inviting them - 42:13). Addressing the Holy Prophet



ﷻ, the verse says, 'Your call to the belief in Oneness of Allah, which is the foundation of the true religion, seems very difficult to the polytheists, although it has been proved to be true through the consensus of all the prophets, because they follow their desires and the teachings of the Shaiṭān (Satan), and have therefore strayed from the right path, which is prohibited as mentioned above.

اللَّهُ يَجْتَبِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يُنِيبُ (Allah chooses [and pulls] towards Himself anyone He wills and guides anyone who turns to Him. - 42:13). There are only two ways for one to have the straight path. One is that Allah Almighty himself selects him for the straight path of His religion and moulds his nature and inclinations accordingly, which happens in the case of prophets and His special friends. It is about them that Qur'ān states إِنَّا أَخْلَصْنَاهُمْ بِخَالِصَةٍ ذُكِّرَى الدَّارِ الْآخِرَةِ (We them chose for a trait of remembering the [eternal] Home [in the Hereafter] - 38:46). The Holy Qur'ān has used the word, '*mukhlaṣīn*' for some particular prophets which means 'chosen'. This peculiar way of guidance has been mentioned in the first sentence of the present verse which says, "اللَّهُ يَجْتَبِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ" "Allah chooses [and pulls] towards Himself anyone He wills." This method of instruction is exceptional and limited. The other method which is general for getting guidance is that when someone turns towards Allah and intends to follow His '*dīn*', then Allah Almighty guides him towards His '*dīn*'. This way of guidance is referred to in the second sentence of the verse which says, "...and guides anyone who turns to Him."

The reason why the *mushrikīn* (polytheists) of Makkah found it difficult to accept the invitation towards the faith in Oneness of Allah is that they did not even have the intention of understanding and following the truth.

وَمَا تَفَرَّقُوا إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ (And they were not divided, in jealousy with each other, but after knowledge had come to them - 42:14). Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه has explained that the pronoun 'they' in this sentence refers to the Quraysh of Makkah, and thus he has taken the verse to mean that the aversion of the infidels of Quraysh to the straight path was in itself a matter of utter ignorance, but on top of it they did so even after knowledge had been imparted by Allah. Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās has held the coming of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ who was the source of all Divine knowledge, to be the imparting of knowledge by Allah. Some scholars,

however, have referred the pronoun 'they' towards the past *ummahs*, and held the meaning to be that the people of the bygone *ummahs* created dissension in the true faith of their respective prophets, and adopted separate ways despite their having received the knowledge of the stright path from then prophets ﷺ.

Be that as it may, the pagans of Makkah and the infidels of the early ages, both demanded that their prophets should also follow the misguidance they themselves had adopted. Therefore the Holy Prophet ﷺ has been addressed in the following verse as follows:

فَلِذَلِكَ فَادُعْ ۖ وَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ۖ وَقُلْ آمَنْتُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ  
مِنْ كِتَابٍ ۖ وَأُمِرْتُ لِأَعْدِلَ بَيْنَكُمْ ۖ اللَّهُ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ ۖ لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ ۖ  
لَا حُجَّةَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ ۖ اللَّهُ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَنَا ۖ وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ

"So, (O prophet,) towards that (faith) invite (people), and be steadfast as you are commanded, and do not follow their desires, and say, "I believe in whatever book Allah has sent down. And I have been ordered to do justice among you. Allah is our Lord and your Lord. For us are our deeds, and for you, your deeds. There is no argumentation between us and you. Allah will bring us together, and to Him is the final return." (42:15)

Hāfiz Ibn Kathīr has stated that this verse comprises ten sentences, and each sentence carries a specific order. As such, ten types of precepts are stated in this one verse. No other verse in the entire Qur'ān has this peculiarity, except 'Āyat-ul-kursiyy which comprises ten types of precepts as well.

**The first order** فَلِذَلِكَ فَادُعْ (So, O Prophet, towards that faith invite people) means: 'Although your call towards *tauḥīd* (Oneness of Allah) sits very heavy on the polytheists, it is no cause for you to give up your invitational call, and you should continue with it.

**The second order** وَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ (and be steadfast as you are commanded) says, 'You yourself ought to stand firm in the religion towards which you are inviting other people. This firmness has to be in accordance with the command of Allah, that is, to be on the moderate side in your beliefs, deeds, morals, habits and social behavior – there should not be even the slightest inclination towards the extremes of *ifrāt* (overdoing something) or *tafrīt* (falling short in something). Obviously

such a firmness is not easy. That is why when some noble companions ﷺ pointed out to the Holy Prophet ﷺ that some of hairs have turned grey, he said, “Sūrah Hūd has turned me old.” This very order (of standing firm as commanded) has been given in Sūrah Hūd also in the same very words. (The meaning of standing firm, the difficulties in observing it and its importance are discussed in detail in the commentary on Sūrah Hūd on page 673 of volume 4 of Ma‘āriful Qur‘ān).

**The third command** وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ (do not follow their desires - ) directs the Holy Prophet ﷺ not to be concerned about the opposition of any opponent in his duty of propagation.

**The fourth command** قُلْ آمَنْتُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ كِتَابٍ (and say “I believe in whatever book Allah has sent down”) is to announce that the Holy Prophet ﷺ believes not only in the Book that has been revealed to him, but he believes in all the former divine books.

**The fifth command** أُمِرْتُ لِأَعْدِلَ بَيْنَكُمْ (I have been ordered to do justice among you) apparently relates to doing justice in the matters of dispute brought to him. But some exegetes have taken the meaning of ‘*adl*’ to be ‘equality’ and thus have taken the sentence to mean that he should treat all the commands of religion equally by believing in all the prophets ﷺ, in all the Books and by obeying all the Divine laws without any exception.

**The sixth sentence** اللَّهُ رَبُّنَا is ‘Allah is our Lord and you Lord.’ which means that all of us are nourished by Allah.

**The seventh sentence** لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ (For us are our deeds and for you, your deeds) states that our deeds would be for us only and you would neither gain nor lose due to our deeds, and your deeds would be for you only and we would neither gain nor lose due to your deeds. Some exegetes have stated that this verse was revealed in Makkah before the command for *jihād* with non-muslims was revealed; the verses conveying the command for *jihād* have cancelled this command, because the essence of *jihād* is to subjugate those people by fighting who do not accept the advice and exhortation – not to let them remain in the state of *kufr*. And some exegetes have stated that this command has not been cancelled; what it means is that since the truth has been proved through logical arguments, its non-acceptance can only be due to enmity and obstinacy,

and as such, everybody is responsible for his own deeds . (Qurtubī)

**The eight command** لَا حُجَّةَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ (there is no argumentations between us and you - ) is that since the disbelievers do not accept the truth, despite its having been proved, which demonstrates their enmity, therefore, further discussion is useless and now there would be no more arguments between the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the disbelievers.

**The ninth sentence** اللَّهُ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَنَا (Allah will bring us together - ) states that on the Day of Judgment, Allah Almighty would gather all of us together and would requite every deed.

**The tenth declaration** وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ (and to Him is the final return - ) is that all of us would return to Him.

### Verses 16 – 18

وَالَّذِينَ يُحَاجُّونَ فِي اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا اسْتُجِيبَ لَهُ حُجَّتُهُمْ دَاحِضَةٌ  
عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ ﴿١٦﴾ اللَّهُ الَّذِي  
أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ وَالْمِيزَانَ ۖ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّ السَّاعَةَ قَرِيبٌ  
﴿١٧﴾ يَسْتَعْجِلُ بِهَا الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهَا ۚ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مُشْفِقُونَ  
مِنْهَا ۚ وَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهَا الْحَقُّ ۚ أَلَا إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُمَارُونَ فِي السَّاعَةِ لَفِي  
ضَلَالٍ بَعِيدٍ ﴿١٨﴾

And those who argue about Allah after He has been responded to<sup>1</sup>, their argument is void in the sight of their Lord, and upon them is wrath, and for them is a severe punishment. [16] Allah is the One who has sent down the Book with truth, and the Balance as well. And what can let you know? May be, the Hour is near. [17] Those who do not believe in it demand for its coming soon, and those who believe are fearful of it, and know it to be a truth. Be aware that those who dispute concerning the Hour are wandering afar from the right path. [18]

[1]. i.e. after many people responded to the call of His prophets by accepting Islam.

## Commentary

In the previous verses, all the people of the whole world had been invited towards the original ‘*dīn*’ (religion) common between all the revealed Books and between all the prophets ﷺ, and were advised to be faithful to it and be steadfast in it. But some infidels, who had no intention of listening and accepting, started arguing with the Muslims, even at this invitation. Some narrations have it that some people of the Book, the Jews and the Christians, put forward the argument that our prophet came before yours and our Book was given before yours, hence our religion is superior to yours. And some narrations have it that this very argument was put forward by the infidels of Quraysh, because they called themselves followers of the religion of Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm عليه السلام.

The Noble Qur’ān has warned these people that the explanations and proofs in favour of Islam and Qur’ān have been fully provided to you, and your own sensible and fair minded people, having accepted them, have embraced Islam, and now their argumentation is nothing but falsehood and misguidance. If they do not accept it, then divine punishment will visit them. This warning is followed by the statement that the Qur’ān is from Allah and contains comprehensive commandments regarding Allah’s rights and the rights of the human beings between one another. This fact is stated in the next sentence, “أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ وَالْمِيزَانَ” ‘has sent down the Book with truth and the Balance as well - 17.’ Here ‘the Book’ means the Qur’ān, and all the previous revealed Books, and ‘truth’ means the divine religion mentioned above, and ‘the Balance’ literally means a weighing balance. Since it is an instrument of weighing one’s due and establishing justice, Sayyidnā Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه has taken it to mean ‘equity’ and ‘justice’. Mujāhid رضي الله عنه a leading exegete, has said that here the ‘Balance’ means full payment of everyone’s rights and doing justice. As such the word ‘truth’ points towards Allah’s rights over His servants, and the word مِيزَان *mīzān* (Balance) points towards the rights of human beings over one another.

The statement that those who believe are fearful of the Doomsday means the fear generated due to cognizance of the awesome horrifying happenings which will take place on the Doomsday, and also due to cognizance of one’s own short comings and wrong-doings. However, sometimes a believer’s eagerness to meet his Lord Allah Almighty overcomes that fear, which does not contradict this statement; some dead

ones are proved to have said in their graves that they wish Doomsday would come soon because the glad tidings given by angels that they would be forgiven and treated kindly, had overcome the fear of Doomsday.

### Verses 19 – 20

اللَّهُ لَطِيفٌ بِعِبَادِهِ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَهُوَ الْقَوِيُّ الْعَزِيزُ ﴿١٩﴾ مَنْ  
كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ الْآخِرَةِ نَزِدْ لَهُ فِي حَرْثِهِ ۚ وَمَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ  
الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا ۖ وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ نَصِيبٍ ﴿٢٠﴾

Allah is kind to His slaves. He gives provision to whom He wills. And He is the Strong, the Mighty. [19] Whoever intends (to have) the harvest of the Hereafter, We will increase in his harvest; and whoever intends (to have) the harvest of the world (only), We will give him thereof, while in the Hereafter there is no share for him. [20]

### Commentary

اللَّهُ لَطِيفٌ بِعِبَادِهِ (Allah is kind to His slaves - 42:19). The word, *latīf* used in the text has more than one lexical meanings. Sayyidnā Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ has translated it here as kind, and Sayyidnā ‘Tkrimah ؓ has translated it as benefactor.

Muqātil ؓ has said that Allah Almighty is kind to all His servants, so much so that even the infidels and sinners keep on being showered with His worldly blessings. There are many types and kinds of the divine bounties, graces and favours showered upon His servants. That is why many meanings of the word *latīf* have been stated in the Tafsīr of Qurṭubī, all of which are covered by the words ‘kind’ and ‘benefactor’.

Although Allah Ta‘ālā provides sustenance to all His creatures without any exception – even to those animals on land and in waters whom nobody knows, yet the present verse states that He provides sustenance ‘to whom He wills’. This is better understood from the explanation given in Tafsīr Maḥzarī which says that there are countless types and kinds of sustenance provided by Allah Ta‘ālā; sustenance as necessary is provided to all and sundry, whereas some special kinds of

sustenance are distributed by Him in degrees and quantities determined by His perfect wisdom. Somebody is given more of wealth and goods, somebody is given more of health and strength, somebody is given more of learning and knowledge and somebody is given more of other types and kinds; in this way everybody is dependent on another person and it is this dependence which persuades people to co-operate with and help each other and which is the foundation of human civilization.

Ja'far Ibn Muḥammad رحمه الله تعالى has said that Allah Ta'ālā's kindness to His servants in the matter of sustenance is in two ways. Firstly, He provides food and other necessities to every living being as per his needs, and secondly, He does not provide sustenance for anyone for the whole of his life all at once, rather gives him gradually according to his need, otherwise its preservation would not have been feasible. (Maḥzarī, Qurṭubī)

### Note

Shāh 'Abdul Ghani Phūlpūrī رحمه الله تعالى relates from Ḥāji Imdādullah رحمه الله تعالى that anyone who recites the above verse i.e. اَللّٰهُ لَطِيفٌ بِعِبَادِهِ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَّشَاءُ ۚ وَهُوَ الْقَوِيُّ الْعَزِيزُ seventy times every morning regularly, would be preserved from shortage of sustenance and said that experience has shown it to be very effective.

### Verses 21 – 23

اَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ شَرَعُوا لَهُمْ مِّنَ الدِّينِ مَا لَمْ يَآذَنْ بِهِ اللّٰهُ ۚ وَلَوْلَا  
 كَلِمَةُ الْفَصْلِ لَفُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ وَاِنَّ الظَّالِمِيْنَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ اَلِيمٌ ﴿٢١﴾  
 تَرَى الظَّالِمِيْنَ مُشْفِقِيْنَ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا وَهُوَ وَاَقَعٌ بِهِمْ ۚ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا  
 وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ فِيْ رَوْضَتِ الْجَنَّةِ ۚ لَهُمْ مَّا يَشَاءُوْنَ عِنْدَ  
 رَبِّهِمْ ۚ ذٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيْرُ ﴿٢٢﴾ ذٰلِكَ الَّذِي يُبَشِّرُ اللّٰهَ عِبَادَهُ  
 الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ ۚ قُلْ لَا اَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ اَجْرًا اِلَّا  
 الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبٰى ۚ وَمَنْ يَقْتَرِفْ حَسَنَةً نَّزِدْ لَهُ فِيْهَا حُسْنًا ۚ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ  
 غَفُوْرٌ شَكُوْرٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

Is it that they have associate-gods who have prescribed for them a religion that is not sanctioned by Allah? And, had it not been for a decisive word, the matter would have been decided between them (here in this world). And of course, for the wrongdoer there is a painful punishment (in the Hereafter). [21] You will see the wrongdoers fearful of what they earned, and (the punishment) it (entails) is sure to befall them. As for those who believed and did righteous deeds, they will be in meadows of the Gardens. For them there is, with their Lord, whatever they wish. That is the great bounty. [22] That is the good news that Allah gives to His slaves who believed and did righteous deeds. Say, "I do not ask you any fee for it, except the love of kinship." And whoever performs a good act, for him We will increase goodness therein. Surely Allah is Most-Forgiving, Very Appreciative. [23]

### Commentary

قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَى (Say, "I do not ask you any fee for it, except the love of kinship - 42:23 ). The explanation of this verse that has been adopted by most of the exegetes is that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has been directed to say the following to the infidels of Quraish, "My real right over all of you is that I am the Messenger of Allah, and you should admit it and obey me for your reformation and betterment; but even if you do not accept my prophethood and messengership, there is still one more right I have over you which you cannot deny; and that is the right of relationship which I have with most of your tribes. You also do not deny the right of relatives and the need of behaving kindly towards them. Therefore, I am not asking you for any compensation for my preaching; all I want is that you should consider my right of being you relative, and refrain from animosity and hostility, irrespective of whether you accept what I am saying or you do not."

Now it is obvious that consideration of the rights of kinship was their own obligation, and could not be taken as compensation for preaching services. Hence the use of the word 'except' in this verse is in its idiomatic sense meaning that although, in reality, it is no compensation, and if you consider it to be so, it is your own mistake. In fact, I do not charge any fee at all. However, I ask you to refrain from the hostile behavior, and to fulfill the rights of kinship which you should do any way.



This explanation of this verse is reported from Sayyidnā Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه in the Ṣaḥīḥ of Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim; Mujāhid, Qatādah and a very large group of leading exegetes have also adopted this explanation. All prophets الأنبياء in every age have openly told their people that they never asked any compensation or payment in lieu of the efforts that they were making for their betterment and well-being; Their compensation would be given by Allah Almighty only. This being so, how could the chief of all the prophets الأنبياء, who is the most honoured and exalted of all of them, ask for compensation from his people.

Sa‘īd Ibn Manṣūr, Ibn Sa‘d, ‘Abd Ibn Ḥumaid, Ḥākim and Baihaqī have related an incident of Imām Sha‘bī, which has been certified by Ḥākim to be correct, that Imām Sha‘bī was questioned by people regarding the explanation of this verse, and thereupon he wrote to Sayyidnā Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه for the correct explanation. The reply he got was the same as explained above. Those interested may consult Tafsīr Rūḥ-ul-Ma‘ānī for the full text of the reply given by Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه. Some words of his reply are added in the report of Ibn Jarīr which may be found in the same book.

There is, however, another narration reported with a weak chain of reporters, according to which Sayyidnā Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه says that when this verse was revealed, people asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ as to who are his kinsfolk, and he replied that Sayyidnā ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, Sayyidah Fāṭimah رضي الله عنها and their offspring’s. The authenticity of this narration has been considered weak by Suyūṭī in Ad-Dur-ul-Manthūr and by Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar in Takhrīj of the Aḥādīth of Kashshāf. According to this narration, the meaning would be that the only compensation the Holy Prophet ﷺ asks from the ummah for his services is that they should take care of his progeny. Obviously, this proposition does not befit the high stature of prophets الأنبياء, and specially that of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Therefore the correct and preferred explanation which is generally favoured by the ummah is the one given above. But the Shi‘ites have not only adopted this doubtful narration, but have also made up a huge stock of baseless presumptions on its basis.

### **Respect and Love for the Holy Prophet’s ﷺ family and progeny**

The explanation given above is to clarify that the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not ask his people to respect and love his progeny in exchange of his

services. But it does not mean that the respect and love for the Holy Prophet ﷺ progeny has no importance. Only an ill-fated, misguided person can think of such a thing. The fact is that one's being a Muslim depends on having reverence and love for the Holy Prophet ﷺ much more than any other person in the whole universe. Naturally, the logical consequence of this reverence and love is to have reverence and love for his close relatives according to the degree of their closeness to the Holy Prophet ﷺ which is obligatory for every Muslim. Since one's children are the closest relations, hence the reverence and love for the children of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is undoubtedly a necessary element of faith. But it does not mean that one should ignore or forget the pure wives رضى الله عنهن اجمعين or other noble Companions رضي الله عنهم who had manifold associations, closeness and relationships with the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The gist is that love for the progeny and for the family members of the Holy Prophet ﷺ has never been a matter of controversy in the ummah. it has been taken by the entire ummah unanimously as an essential requirement of faith. Controversies arise when the reverence of others is attacked, otherwise reverence and love for even common descendents of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, known as *sādat*, no matter how distantly related to him, is an honour for a Muslim and is a source of reward in the Hereafter. Since many people started neglecting it, Imām Shāfi'ī رحمه الله تعالى denounced this attitude in a few couplets reproduced below:

ياراكباً قف بالمحصب من منى      واهتف بساكن خيفها والناهض  
سحراً إذا فاض الحجيج الى منى      فيضاً كملتطم الفرات الفاض  
إن كان رفضاً حُبُّ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ      فليشهد الثقلان انى رافضى

“O rider! Halt near the valley of Muḥaṣṣab in Minā, and when the sea of Ḥajj pilgrims advances in quick waves towards Minā in the morning, announce to every passer-by and inhabitant of the area that if only the love of the progeny of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is *rifd* (extreme Shi‘ism), then I ask all the jins and humans of this universe to witness that I am also a *rāfiḍī* (staunch Shi‘ah)”

This statement of Imām Shāfi'ī, in fact, is the standpoint of the whole ummah.

## Verses 24 - 26

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا فَإِنْ يَشِإِ اللَّهُ يَخْتُمْ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ ۖ  
 وَيَمْحُ اللَّهُ الْبَاطِلَ وَيُحِقُّ الْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَاتِهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿٢٤﴾  
 وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَقْبَلُ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَعْفُو عَنِ السَّيِّئَاتِ  
 وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ وَيَسْتَجِيبُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ  
 وَيَزِيدُهُمْ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۚ وَالْكَافِرُونَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

Is it that they say, "He has forged a lie against Allah"? So, if Allah wills, He may put a seal on your heart.<sup>1</sup> And Allah blots out falsehood and establishes truth with His words. Surely, He is fully aware of what lies in the hearts. [24] And He is the One who accepts repentance from His slaves, and forgives evil deeds, and knows whatever you do. [25] And He responds to (the prayer of) those who believe and do righteous deeds, and gives them more out of His grace. As for the disbelievers, for them there is a severe punishment. [26]

## Commentary

The first verse conveys Allah Almighty's reply to those who held the prophethood and messengership of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to be false, the Qur'ān to be wrong and forged. The the reply is based on a divine rule that miracles or events occurring against normal course which cannot be performed by ordinary human beings are created and shown through prophets, by Allah Almighty's Grace, to prove their prophethood, without any discretion of the prophets themselves.

Although some magicians also do perform such magical tricks, but obviously neither the prophets nor the magicians can perform any of these things without Allah Almighty's intent and scheme. He allows the magicians to perform their tricks as a measure of test and trial. However,

1. It means that the miraculous Qur'ān recited by the unlettered Prophet ﷺ is in itself a clear proof of its being revealed by Allah Ta'ālā. Allah's practice is such that if a person falsely claims to be a prophet, He does not let him show any miracle. Therefore, had there been, God forbid, something forged by the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the Qur'ān, Allah would have put a seal on his heart, and he would have never been able to come up with such a miraculous discourse.

to differentiate between magic and miracle and between a magician and a prophet, the rule devised by Him is that no false claimant of prophethood can perform any magical trick successfully; magical tricks can be performed successfully by one until he claims prophethood, but the magic vanishes as soon as one lays a false claim of prophethood.

When Allah Ta'ālā bestows prophethood and messengership on anyone, He also favours him with miracles and makes those miracles highly visible. Thus He provides physical and decreed proof of his prophethood. And He also confirms him in His Divine Book.

In view of this rule, it should be understood that the Noble Qur'ān is such a miracle that all the humans and all the jins of this world are unable to produce even one verse comparable to the verse of the Qur'ān. Their inability to do so was proved in the days of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and continues till today. Such an open and obvious miracle cannot be accomplished by a false claimant of prophethood. The Holy Prophet's claim to '*wahy*' and messengership is, therefore, correct and true, and those who hold it to be incorrect and forged are misguided calumniators.

The deniers and opponents have been advised in the second verse that there is still time to give up and renounce their disbelief and '*kufr*'. Allah is very merciful and Most Beneficent; He accepts the repentance of those who truly repent, and forgives their sins.

### **The Reality of '*Taubah*' (Repentance)**

The literal meaning of '*taubah*' is to return and turn to; in religious terminology, giving up and renunciation of any sin is called '*taubah*'. There are three conditions for its being proper and genuine.

One is to give up, immediately, the sin one is involved in. The second is to repent for the past sin, and the third is to determine firmly not to commit it in future. If it pertains to neglect of any obligatory duty (*farḍ*), one has to start observing it or start offering '*qaḍā*' (prescribed compensation). If it relates to the rights of another person and if that right is monetary or material and the concerned person is alive, then the material or money has to be returned to him, unless he agrees to forgo, and if that person is not alive, but his heirs are available, then the material or money has to be returned to the heirs; if the heirs are also not available, then the material or money has to be deposited in the Islamic

public treasury (*bait-ul-māl*) – if there is no public treasury, or it is not managed properly, then the material or money has to be given as alms on his behalf. If the right owed to another person is not monetary or material, for example, if another person has been distressed unduly, or he has been abused or his backbiting has been committed, then he has to be pleased and forgiveness has to be sought and obtained from him or her.

It is important to note that for all kinds of 'taubah', giving up of sin must be for the sake of Allah, and not due to any physical inability or weakness. The 'Sharī'ah' demands that one ought to renounce all the sins, but if someone renounces only a particular sin, Ahl-us-Sunnah hold that that particular sin would be forgiven, whereas his liability for other sins would continue.

### Verses 27 – 35

وَلَوْ بَسَطَ اللَّهُ الرِّزْقَ لِعِبَادِهِ لَبَغَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَكِنْ يُنْزِلُ بِقَدَرٍ  
مَا يَشَاءُ ۖ إِنَّهُ بِعِبَادِهِ خَبِيرٌ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَهُوَ الَّذِي يُنْزِلُ الْغَيْثَ مِنْ  
بَعْدِ مَا قَنَطُوا وَيَنْشُرُ رَحْمَتَهُ ۖ وَهُوَ الْوَلِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ ﴿٢٨﴾ وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ  
خَلْقَ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَابَتْ فِيهِمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ ۖ وَهُوَ عَلَى  
جَمْعِهِمْ إِذَا يَشَاءُ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٩﴾ وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ  
أَيْدِيكُمْ وَيَعْفُوا عَنْ كَثِيرٍ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَمَا أَنْتُمْ بِمُعْجِزِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ  
وَمَا لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿٣١﴾ وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ الْجَوَارِ  
فِي الْبَحْرِ كَالْأَعْلَامِ ﴿٣٢﴾ إِنْ يَشَأْ يُسْكِنِ الرِّيحَ فَيَظْلَلْنَ رَوَاكِدَ  
عَلَى ظَهْرِهِ ۖ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ ﴿٣٣﴾ أَوْ يُوبِقُهُنَّ  
بِمَا كَسَبُوا وَيَعْفُ عَنْ كَثِيرٍ ﴿٣٤﴾ وَيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ يُجَادِلُونَ فِي  
الْإِنْتَانِ مَا لَهُمْ مِنْ مَحِيصٍ ﴿٣٥﴾

And should Allah expand the provision for His slaves (to its full extent), they would spread mischief on earth; but He sends down what He wills in (due) measure.

Surely, with regard to His slaves, He is All-Aware, Ever-Watchful. [27] And He is the One who sends down rain after they have lost hope, and He extends His mercy. And He is the Guardian, Worthy of all praise. [28] And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and of the creatures He has spread in them. And He is Powerful to assemble them whenever He so wills. [29] And whatever hardship befalls you is because of what your own hands have committed, while He overlooks many (of your faults). [30] And you are not able to frustrate (Him) in the earth. And, besides Allah, you have neither someone to protect, nor someone to help. [31] And among His signs are ships in the sea, like mountains. [32] If He wills, He may stop the wind, so they will stand still on its back. Surely in this, there are signs for everyone who is ever patient, fully grateful. [33] Or He may destroy them because of what they earned, and may overlook many, [34] and (in such an event) those who raise disputes in Our verses will come to know that there is no way for them to escape. [35]

## Commentary

### Sequence and background of Revelation

In these verses, Allah Almighty has given the proof of His Oneness by pointing out to the perfection of His Wisdom through which He has tied up the whole universe with a stable system, which is surely being supervised by a Being who is All-Wise and All-Aware.

Allah Almighty has opened this subject by pointing towards the economic system which He, in His Wisdom, has established in this world. This subject bears a relationship with the previous verses wherein it had been stated that Allah Almighty accepts the worships of the believers which includes acceptance of their supplications as well. Here one could get perplexed by the frequent observation that a Muslim supplicates for some worldly need, but his objective is not met; this doubt has been removed in the first of the above verses. The gist of the clarification is that sometimes fulfillment of one's all desires is neither in his own interest nor in the interest of his society. As such, if any supplication of anyone at any time has apparently not been accepted, it would be for the sake of greater well-being of the universe which nobody knows, except the All-knowing, All-wise Creator. If every human being of this world is given every kind

of sustenance and every kind of blessings, this system of the world just cannot be managed wisely. (Tafsīr Kabīr)

Some narrations also corroborate that this verse was revealed about those Muslims who used to wish that they also should get the same wealth and opulence as was available to the infidels. Imām Baghawī رحمه الله تعالى has reproduced the statement of Sayyidnā Khabbāb Ibn 'Aratt ؓ that when they saw the wealth and opulence of Banū Quraizah, Banū Naḍīr and Banū Qainuqā' (the Jewish tribes), the desire to have such affluence welled up in their hearts also, and thereafter this verse was revealed. And Sayyidnā 'Amr Ibn Ḥārith ؓ states that some of the companions of Ṣuffah had expressed their desire to the Holy Prophet ﷺ that Allah Almighty may make them wealthy and this verse was revealed thereafter. (Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī, etc.)

### General Abundance of Wealth in the World is cause of Tumult

However, this verse states that had every kind of sustenance and every kind of blessing been provided abundantly to every individual of this world, the discord and dispute between one another would have crossed all limits, because due to abundance of wealth, nobody would be in need of another person, nor would one be subdued by another. On the other hand, one attribute of wealth is that greed and inordinate desire also increase with the increase in wealth. It would necessarily have resulted in the common use of force to get possession of another person's property, hence disputes and fights, rebellion and other misdeeds would have crossed all limits. That is why Allah Ta'ālā, instead of providing everybody with every kind of sustenance and every kind of blessing, has distributed his blessings in such a way that somebody has abundance of riches and wealth, another person is healthier and stronger than others, yet another person is more comely and beautiful than others, and yet another has surpassed others in knowledge and wisdom. In short, everybody is dependent on others for one thing or another, and it is this inter-dependence which is the foundation of civilization.

This is the meaning of وَلَٰكِنْ يُنَزَّلُ بِقَدَرٍ مَّا يَشَاءُ (but He sends down what He wills in (due) measure - 42:27) It means that Allah has bestowed His blessings upon the people of this world in a special way. And by stating further on إِنَّهُ بِعِبَادِهِ خَبِيرٌ بَصِيرٌ (Surely, with regard to His slaves, He is All-Aware, Ever-watchful - 42:27) it has been indicated that Allah

Almighty knows very well what is good for a person and what is harmful. Accordingly, He has provided everybody with what is good for him, and if He has deprived somebody of anything, it is because of his and the whole world's welfare. It is not at all necessary that we should understand the underlying wisdom and welfare behind the decision about every individual, because everyone thinks on the basis of his limited knowledge, whereas Allah Almighty is looking at the whole world. Therefore it is simply not possible to gauge all of His Wisdom. A perceivable parallel would be the case of an honest head of state who has passed certain orders which happen to affect some people adversely, and these people naturally face problems. Now a person who has been so affected adversely is quite likely to feel bad about those orders of the head of the state, because his thinking is limited to his own interest. But a person who is looking at the circumstances of the whole state and the whole nation and who appreciates that the whole state cannot be sacrificed for the sake of one individual's interest, does not consider such a step to be bad. Then how is it possible to gauge the Wisdom of the Being who is managing the system of the whole universe? If this point is kept in mind, the confusion and perplexity generated by the sight of anyone surrounded by tribulation would disappear by itself.

This verse also tells us that distribution of wealth and goods equally to all the people of the world is neither possible, nor desirable nor is it required for the existence of the system of the universe. This issue will be discussed in detail in explanation of the verse نَحْنُ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَعِيشَتَهُمْ (43:32) of surah Zukhruf.

### **The Difference between Paradise and the World**

Here a question may arise that all kinds of blessings will be provided in abundance to all human beings in Paradise, so why would it not cause mischief there? And the answer is that the cause of mischief in this world is the abundance of wealth and goods coupled with greed and inordinate desire to have more and more which keeps on increasing with wealth. But greed and inordinate desire would simply not be there in Paradise, although blessings and delights will keep on being showered. And that is why this mischief would not surface there.

The question why could not greed and inordinate desire be removed and wealth and goods be provided in abundance in this world as well, is



quite irrelevant. The very purpose of creating this world is to have co-existence of good and evil. It is simply not possible without it to arrange trial of human beings which is the real purpose of creation of the universe. Therefore, the real purpose of creating this universe would have failed, if greed and desire had been removed altogether from human beings. Paradise, on the other hand, would comprise goodness only, therefore, such base emotions will simply not be there.

هُوَ الَّذِي يُنْزِلُ الْغَيْثَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا قَطُرُوا (And He is the One who sends down rain after they have lost hope - 42:28)". It is usual for Allah Almighty to send down rain whenever the earth is in severe need of water. But by saying "after they have lost hope", attention is being drawn towards the fact that sometimes Allah Almighty, in deviation from His usual norm, delays sending down rain so much that people begin losing hope. Apart from trial, such a happening is to warn that rain and famine are all in the power of Allah Ta'ālā; whenever He wants, He stops rain because of people's misdeeds, etc., so that people turn their attention towards His kindness, and display their humility and dependence. If rains had been subject to a strict time-table without any deviation, people would have considered rains to be purely subject to apparent causes, and would have become inattentive to Allah's Almighty's power. Here losing hope means losing hope in their contrivances because disappointment with Allah's kindness is *kufr* (infidelity).

وَمَا بَثَّ فِيهِمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ (and the creatures He has spread in them - 29). The original lexical meaning of دَابَّةٌ 'dābbah' (used in the text and translated as 'creatures') is anything which moves about of its own will; later on this word began to be used for animals. This verse states that Allah Almighty has created many creatures which move about on the earth as well as in the sky. The creatures which move about on the earth are all too visible; the ones which move about in the sky could well be the angels as well, and it is quite possible that there may be some animals in the sky so far unknown to man.

Briefly, in view of the system of the universe, Allah Almighty has not provided every one with wealth and goods in abundance, rather He has distributed them in accordance with the dictates of wisdom. But the good things of universe which are of general benefit have been provided to everyone. Rain, clouds, earth, sky and the creatures therein have all been

created for the benefit of human beings, and they all demonstrate the Oneness of Allah. If after all this, anyone suffers any hardship, he should consider it to be due to his own deeds, and he should do a little heart searching, instead of complaining against Allah Ta'ālā.

(And whatever hardship befalls you is because of what your own hands have committed, while He overlooks many [of your faults].... 42:30) means exactly the same. Sayyidnā Ḥasan عليه السلام has narrated that when this verse was revealed, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said "I swear by the Being Who holds my life, that anyone who gets scratched by a piece of wood, or his nerve shivers or his step falters is all due to his sins, and Allah Ta'ālā does not punish for every sin, rather the number of sins He overlooks far exceeds those for which any punishment is given." Maulānā Ashraf Alī Thānavī رحمه الله تعالى has stated that just as the physical hardships and tortures befall due to sins, the inner ailments are also caused by sins. One sin committed by a person becomes the cause for getting involved in other sins. Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Qayyim has written in his book *Ad-Dawā-ush- Shāfi* that one prompt punishment of a sin is that one gets involved in other sins; similarly the prompt reward of a virtuous deed is that it attracts another virtue. Baiḍāwī and others have stated that this verse is specifically meant for those people who are likely to commit sins. The hardships and the troubles that befall prophets who are innocent of sins, children who have not reached the age of puberty and mad persons, who do not commit any sin, are not covered by this verse. There are other reasons for them, for example, they are upgraded in their rewards. And in reality a man cannot fathom the depths of wisdom behind them. (Allah knows best)

It is proved from some narrations of Ḥadīth, as reproduced by Ḥākim in Mustadrak and by Baghawī on the authority of Sayyidnā 'Alī عليه السلام that those sins for which punishment is given in this world are forgiven for Muslims in the Hereafter. (Mazharī)

### Verses 36 – 43

فَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ فَمَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ  
وَأَبْقَى لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَالَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ

كَثِيرَ الْإِثْمِ وَالْفَوَاحِشَ وَإِذَا مَا غَضِبُواهُمْ يَغْفِرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَالَّذِينَ  
 اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَى بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا  
 رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَهُمُ الْبَغْيُ هُمْ يَنْتَصِرُونَ  
 ﴿٣٩﴾ وَجَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِثْلُهَا ۚ فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۗ  
 إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾ وَلَمَنِ انْتَصَرَ بَعْدَ ظُلْمِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَا  
 عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ سَبِيلٍ ﴿٤١﴾ إِنَّمَا السَّبِيلُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَظْلِمُونَ النَّاسَ  
 وَيَبْغُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٤٢﴾  
 وَلَمَنْ صَبَرَ وَغَفَرَ ۖ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ لَمِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ﴿٤٣﴾

So, whatever thing has been given to you is an enjoyment of the worldly life. And that which is with Allah is much better, and much more durable for those who believe and place their trust in Allah, [36] and (for) those who abstain from the major sins and from shameless acts; and (for those who) when they get angry, they forgive, [37] and those who have responded to their Lord (in submission to Him), and have established salah, and whose affairs are (settled) with consultation between them, and who spend out of what We have given to them, [38] and those who, when they are subjected to aggression, defend themselves. [39] And the recompense of evil is evil like it. Then the one who forgives and compromises has his reward undertaken by Allah. Surely, He does not like the unjust. [40]

And the one who defends himself after having been wronged, there is no blame on such people. [41] Blame, in fact, is upon those who wrong people and make mischief on earth unjustly. For such people there is a painful punishment. [42] And if one observes patience and forgives, it is, of course, one of the courageous conducts. [43]

### Commentary

The above verses state the imperfection and temporary nature of the blessings of this world, as against the perfection and permanence of the blessings of the Hereafter. The most important and major condition for

obtaining the heavenly blessings in the Hereafter is faith and belief, without which nobody can get them. However, if in addition to faith, one has taken full care of virtuous deeds as well, then one will get the heavenly blessings right from the beginning, otherwise one would get them after being punished for one's sins and shortcomings. That is why the first condition stated in the above verses is belief referred to by the words, "those who believe". Then those particular deeds have been stated without which, according to the rule, the bounties of the Hereafter will not be obtained from the beginning, but after having been punished for one's sins. The rule is there for application in general, but if Allah Ta'ālā wills, He may forgive all the sins of the greatest of the sinners, and give him the blessings of the Hereafter right from the beginning, He is not subject to any rule or code. Now, let us look at those particular virtues and deeds which have been mentioned with such an importance.

**First virtue:** عَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ (and place their trust in Allah - 36,) meaning those who place their trust in Allah, under all circumstances, in all matters; they do not consider anyone else to be the real cause of any thing.

**Second virtue:** الَّذِينَ يَحْتَنِبُونَ كَثِيرَ الْإِثْمِ وَالْفَوَاحِشِ (those who abstain from the major sins and from shameless acts - 37). What are major sins? Details have already been stated in the commentary of Sūrah Nisā'; the author has also given a complete list of major and minor sins in his booklet in Urdu published under the little of "Gunah-e- bay ladhdhat (گناہ بے لذت)".

The wisdom behind specially mentioning shameless acts, apart from all the other major sins, is that they are not only graver, but also infectious in that they influence others also. Shameless acts include adultery and the acts that precede it as preludes, and those bad deeds which are committed brazenly in public, because they corrupt the whole society and their liability is also very severe.

**Third virtue:** وَإِذَا مَا غَضِبُوا هُمْ يَغْفِرُونَ (and when they get angry, they forgive - 37,) This is a moral quality of the highest order, because when love and anger prevail upon someone, they make him blind and deaf, and he loses his ability to distinguish right from wrong, and true from false, rather, he cannot appreciate the results of his own actions. The one who is angry tries his utmost to vent his anger fully upon the one with

whom he is angry. That is why Allah Ta‘ālā has defined this quality of Mu’mins and virtuous persons that when they are angry, they not only maintain the limits of right and wrong, but also forgo their justified rights.

**Fourth virtue:** وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ (and those who have responded to their Lord [in submission to Him] and have established Ṣalāh - 38). ‘Responding to the Lord’ means to accept Allah’s orders immediately, without questioning them, and get ready to obey them, irrespective of whether the order is or is not according to one’s liking. This includes carrying out all the obligatory duties and avoiding all the things considered unlawful and undesirable in Islam. But ṣalāh being the most important of all the obligations, and having the quality of enabling discharge of other duties and avoidance of unlawful things, has been mentioned prominently.

**The fifth virtue:** وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَى بَيْنَهُمْ (whose affairs are settled with consultation between them - 38). The sense is that in all important affairs where the Shari’ah is silent, they they consult each other. ‘Affairs’ have been qualified by us with the word ‘important’, because the word ‘Amr’ used in the text signifies importance in common usage. It has been clarified in the explanation of the verse (وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ And consult them in the matter - 3:159) of sūrah ‘Āl-Imrān that important affairs include affairs of the state as well as important affairs in general. Ibn Kathīr has stated that consultation in the important affairs of the state is compulsory. The selection of the head of the state through consultation, ordained by Islam, brought to an end the autocratic rule of kings of the days of ignorance who used to take the state as an inherited estate. As such, Islam laid the foundation of real democracy by ending autocracy. But Islam, unlike western democracies, has not given total authority to the public. There are certain restrictions on the members of the advisory body. So the system of government in Islam is a very moderate one, quite apart from autocracy and western democracy. Please see details in the second volume of Ma’arifulQur’ān from page 227 to 238.

Imām Jaṣṣāṣ has stated in Aḥkām-ul-Qur’ān that this verse has made the importance of consultation evident, and we are under orders to consult wise and far sighted people for taking action in important matters requiring advice, and not to act hurriedly relying only on ourselves.

## Importance of consultation and its process

Khaṭīb Baghdādī has narrated the following statement of Sayyidnā ‘Alī عليه السلام “I asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ that if, after you we face a situation about which neither the Qur’ān has any specific ruling, nor have you given any direction, how should we proceed?” The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied by saying,

اجمعوا له العابدين من امتي واجعلوه بينكم شورى ولا تقضوا برأى واحد

“In such a case, assemble *‘ābidīn* (the worshipping people) of my ummah, and decide the matter by mutual consultation; do not take decision on any individual’s single opinion.” (Rūḥ-ul-Ma‘ānī, referring to Khaṭīb)

In some versions of this narration, the word ‘*fuqahā*’ (jurists) also appears alongwith *‘ābidīn* (the worshipping people) which means that the jurists who have understanding of the religion and worshipers are the ones who should be consulted.

The author of Rūḥ-ul-Ma‘ānī has stated that if the above process is not followed in consultation, rather irreligious people and people without proper knowledge of religion are consulted, the ill effects would prevail upon the good in their advice.

Baihaqī رحمه الله تعالى has narrated in Shu‘ab-ul-Īmān from Sayyidnā Ibn Umar عليه السلام that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said, “Anyone who intends to do something, and he takes that action after consultation, Allah Ta‘ālā would guide him towards the best possible option.” It means that He will turn that person’s direction towards an option that results in his betterment. A similar *ḥadīth* reported by Sayyidnā Ḥasan عليه السلام has been reproduced by Bukhārī in Al-Adab-ul-Mufrad, and by ‘Abd Ibn Ḥumaid in his Musnad that the Holy Prophet ﷺ, after reciting the above verse, said:

ما تشاور قوم قط الا هتدوا لأرشد أمرهم

“When a nation takes an action after mutual consultation, it is surely guided towards the correct course.”

As reported in a *ḥadīth*, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, “So far as your rulers are the best among you, your rich people are generous (enough to spend in the way of Allah and on poor people) and your affairs are

decided through mutual consultation, then the back of the earth would be better for you than its belly (i.e. the life would be better than death) but when your rulers are the worst from among you, your rich people are misers and your affairs are given in the charge of women, then the belly of the earth will be better for you than its back (i.e. death will be better than life). (Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī)

**Sixth virtue:-** مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ (who spend out of what We have given to them - 38) It refers to spending for virtuous deeds, such as *zakāh*, obligatory and optional alms. Qur'ān usually mentions *zakāh* and *ṣadaqāt* (alms) immediately after *ṣalāh*. But the mention of mutual consultation immediately after *ṣalāh* and the mention of *Zakāh* after it is perhaps to attract attention to the possibility of utilizing the five times daily *ṣalāh* congregation in mosques for the purpose of consultation also in matters which require mutual consultation. (Ruh-ul-Ma'ani)

**Seventh virtue:-** وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَهُمُ الْبَغْيُ هُمْ يَنْتَصِرُونَ (and those who, when they are subjected to aggression, defend themselves - 39.) The original word used in the text is '*yantaṣirūn*' which may be translated as 'defend themselves' and also as 'retaliate'. In the latter case, retaliation must be equal, and should in no case exceed the limit of equality. This quality, in reality, is a further elaboration of the third virtue, i.e forgiving the opponents. It means that though forgiveness is a good quality, yet one may face certain situations where the mischief gets a fillip if one forgives, and hence it is better to take revenge in those situations. This verse has defined the rule that in those situations where taking revenge is the more suitable option, one has to take care that one does not exceed the equalizing limit, otherwise he will become unjust and transgressor. That is why this verse is followed by the verse 40, وَجَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِثْلُهَا (and the recompense of evil is evil like it.) which lays down the equitable rule of retaliation that one may cause just as much physical or monetary harm to his opponent as he has received from him; but the condition is that causing that harm is not a sin in itself. For example, if someone has been forced by another to take an alcoholic drink, it would not be permissible for him to force the other person to take an alcoholic drink.

Although permission has been given in this verse to take revenge in equal measure, but immediately thereafter it is emphasized again that فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ "the one who forgives and compromises has his reward

undertaken by Allah. - 40” The instruction is that to forgive is better. More details are given in the later two verses.

### The Moderate decision between forgiveness and revenge

Ibrāhīm Nakha'ī رحمه الله تعالى has stated that former virtuous elders did not like that Muslims are disgraced and debased by the sinners and oppressors who, if not taken to task, may be encouraged to their further wrongdoings. Therefore, where it is apprehended that the sinners and oppressors would become more daring and would harass the decent people if they are forgiven, then it is better to take revenge from them. And to forgive would be better in case the transgressor is repentant, and there is no apprehension of his becoming more daring. Qāḍī Abū Bakr Ibn-ul-'Arabī in Aḥkām-ul-Qur'ān and Qurṭubī in his Tafsīr have concurred to the view that forgiveness and revenge are applicable as suitable, in different situations,. For one who is repentant after having transgressed, it is better to forgive and for one who is stubborn and insistent upon transgression, it is better to take revenge.

Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thanawī رحمه الله تعالى has, however, explained the issue in Bayān-ul-Qur'ān from a little different angle. He says that Allah Ta'ālā has mentioned two qualities particular to the true, sincere and virtuous Muslims in both the verses. The verse emphasizing on forgiveness tells us that they are not overcome by anger, rather kindness and generosity remains dominant in their temperament because of which they forgive the ones who commit excess against them. And in the verse that refers to revenge, we are told that it is a particular quality of these virtuous people that if at any time their heart is inclined to take revenge of an injustice and they do so, they do not exceed the equitable limit, although to forgive is always better for them.

### Verses 44 – 50

وَمَنْ يُضْلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ مِّنْ بَعْدِهِ ۖ وَتَرَى الظَّالِمِينَ لَمَّا رَأَوْا  
الْعَذَابَ يَقُولُونَ هَلْ إِلَىٰ مَرَدٍّ مِّنْ سَبِيلٍ ﴿٤٤﴾ وَتَرَاهُمْ يُعْرَضُونَ  
عَلَيْهَا خَشِيعِينَ مِنَ الدَّلِّ يَنْظُرُونَ مِنْ طَرْفٍ خَفِيٍّ ۖ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ  
أَمَنُوا إِنَّ الْخَاسِرِينَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَأَهْلِيَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ ۖ



أَلَا إِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ فِي عَذَابٍ مُّقِيمٍ ﴿٤٥﴾ وَمَا كَانَ لَهُمْ مِنْ أَوْلِيَاءَ  
 يَنْصُرُونَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يُضْلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ سَبِيلٍ ﴿٤٦﴾  
 اسْتَجِيبُوا لِرَبِّكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَا مَرَدَّ لَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ  
 مَّلْجَأٍ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَمَا لَكُم مِّنْ نَّكِيرٍ ﴿٤٧﴾ فَإِنْ أَعْرَضُوا فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ  
 عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِظًا إِلَّا عَلَيْكَ إِلَّا الْبَلْعُ وَإِنَّا إِذَا أَذَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنَّا  
 رَحْمَةً فَرَحَ بِهَا وَإِنْ تُصِيبُهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ فَإِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ  
 كَفُورٌ ﴿٤٨﴾ لِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يُخْلِقُ مَا يَشَاءُ يَهَبُ  
 لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ إِنَاءًا وَيَهَبُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ الدُّكُورَ ﴿٤٩﴾ أَوْ يُزَوِّجُهُمْ ذُكْرَانًا  
 وَإِنَاءًا وَيَجْعَلُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ عَقِيمًا إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٥٠﴾

And the one whom Allah lets go astray, there is no one for him to protect thereafter. And you will see the wrongdoers, when they will see the punishment, that they will say, "Is there any way to be sent back (to the world)? " [44] And you will see them being presented to it (the Fire), downcast because of humiliation, looking with stealthy glance. And those who believe will say, "The real losers are those who have lost their own selves and their families on the Day of Judgment." Be aware that the wrongdoers are in lasting punishment. [45] And for them there will not be any friends who may help them besides Allah. And the one whom Allah lets go astray, for him there is no way (to save himself). [46] Respond to your Lord before there comes a day for which there will be no reversal from Allah's side. For you there will be neither a refuge that day, nor an opportunity to question (Allah about your fate). [47] So, if they turn away, then We did not send you as a supervisor over them. You are not responsible but for conveying the message. And when We make man taste mercy from Us, he rejoices with it, and if an evil befalls him because of what their hands sent ahead, then man becomes ungrateful. [48] To Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He creates what He wills. He grants females to whom He wills, and grants males to whom He wills. [49] Or He combines for them

**couples, both males and females, and makes whom He wills barren. Surely, He is All-Knowing, Very-Powerful.**

[50]

### Commentary

The earlier three of the above verses state the end of those people who, as against the virtuous Muslims, remained desirous of the delights and luxuries of this world, instead of caring about the Hereafter. Then in verse 47, they have been advised to repent and embrace faith before the scourge of Doomsday comes upon them. Thereafter, in verse 48, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has been comforted and assured that if these people do not come to their senses, despite your preaching again and again, and despite your tireless efforts, then you should not worry: **فَإِنْ أَعْرَضُوا فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا** "So, if they turn away, then We did not send you as a supervisor over them. You are not responsible but for conveying the message" - 48.

Verses 49 and 50 state the absolute power and perfect wisdom of Allah Ta'ālā in the creation of this universe in which He has no partner, and then mankind has been called to believe in the Oneness of Allah. In this regard, after stating the creation of the earth and the heavens, Allah Almighty has stated a fact about His power in verse 49, **يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ** (He creates what He wills.) to indicate that He has absolute Power to create anything small or big. He creates whatever He wills whenever He wills. In this context, creation of mankind has been mentioned by saying, "He grants females to whom He wills, and grants males to whom He wills. Or He combines for them couples, both males and females, and makes whom He wills barren. Surely He is All-Knowing, Very Powerful. (49,50)" It means that nobody's intention or authority has anything to do in the creation of a human being, nor does anybody have its knowledge. What to say of anybody else, even the intention or choice of the parents, who are the apparent agents of the creation of a human beings, does not have any bearing on the child's creation. Let alone having a say in the child's creation, the mother does not even know before the child is born, as to what is being formed in her womb, and how it is being processed.

It is Allah Ta'ālā alone who grants female children to whom He wills, and male children to whom He wills; to some He grants both male and female children, and He renders some females barren who do not have any children.

While stating the sex of children in this verse, Allah Ta‘ālā has mentioned females first, and males later. Taking a hint from this verse, Sayyidnā Wāthilah Ibn Asqa’ ؑ has said that blessed is the woman who gives birth to a daughter first. (Qurtubī)

### Verses 51 – 53

وَمَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَنْ يُكَلِّمَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا وَحْيًا أَوْ مِنْ وَرَائِ حِجَابٍ  
 أَوْ يُرْسِلَ رَسُولًا فَيُوحِيَ بِإِذْنِهِ مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ حَكِيمٍ ﴿٥١﴾  
 وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِّنْ أَمْرِنَا مَا كُنْتَ تَدْرِي مَا الْكِتَابُ  
 وَلَا الْإِيمَانُ وَلَكِنْ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُورًا نَّهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ نَّشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا  
 وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِي إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٥٢﴾ صِرَاطِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَهُ مَا فِي  
 السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ أَلَا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَصِيرُ الْأُمُورُ ﴿٥٣﴾

And it is not (possible) for a human being that Allah speaks to him, except by way of revelation, or from behind a curtain, or that He sends a messenger, then he reveals, with His permission, what He wills. Surely, He is High, Wise. [51] And in similar way, We have revealed to you a Spirit from Our command. You did not know earlier what is the Book or what is ‘Iman’ (true faith), but We have made it (the Qur’ān) a light with which We guide whomsoever We will from among Our slaves. And indeed you are guiding (people) to a straight path, [52] the path of Allah, the One to whom belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. Be aware that towards Allah all matters shall finally return. [53]

### Commentary

The first of the above verses (51) was revealed in response to a hostile Jewish demand. As mentioned by Baghawī, Qurtubī and others, the Jews asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ, “How can we believe in you while you neither see Allah Ta‘ālā, nor do you speak to Him face to face, as Sayyidnā Mūsā ؑ used to see and converse with Allah Ta‘ālā?”

The Holy Prophet ﷺ told the Jews that it is wrong to say that Sayyidnā Mūsā ؑ has seen Allah Ta‘ālā. Then this verse was revealed

to announce that it is not possible for any human being to converse with Allah Ta'ālā face to face in this world. Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام also did not hear Allah Ta'ālā face to face, but only heard the voice from behind a curtain.

This verse also tells us that there are only three ways in which Allah Ta'ālā speaks to a human being. One is '*wahy*' which is infusion of something in the heart. It can happen while one is awake, and it can also happen during sleep in the form of a dream as stated in many *aḥādīth* that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, *أُلْقِيَ فِي رُوعِي* (This has been infused in my heart. And the dreams of the prophets عليهم السلام are also a form of wahy, because Satan cannot find his way in them. In case of dreams, the words do not usually come from Allah Ta'ālā; only the subject matter is infused in the mind which is then rendered by the prophets in their own words.

The second way in which Allah may address a person, as mentioned in the above verses, is that Allah speaks from behind a curtain, as happened to Sayyidnā Mūsā عليه السلام on Mount Ṭūr, where he heard the speech of Allah Ta'ālā, but did not see Him. Therefore he asked Allah Ta'ālā to show Himself. The reply was in negative, as mentioned by the Holy Qur'an in sūrah A'rāf (7:143).

And this curtain which prevents man from seeing Allah Ta'ālā is not something which can hide Allah Ta'ālā, because nothing can hide His All-Pervasive Light. Rather, it is the weakness of man's vision that becomes a curtain against seeing Allah. That is why when his vision would be strengthened in Paradise, every dweller of Heaven will be favoured with ability to see Allah Ta'ālā, as per the creed of Ahl-us-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah in accordance with the explanations of correct *aḥādīth*.

This rule that no one can converse face to face with Allah Ta'ālā, without any curtain in-between, pertains to this world. The specific mention of 'human being' in this verse is because the intention here is to address mankind. Otherwise, apparently Allah Ta'ālā does not speak face to face even with the angels, as stated by Sayyidnā Jibra'īl عليه السلام in a narration of Tirmidhī, "I had become very close, and yet there were seventy-thousand more curtains." And if the face to face conversation of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with Allah Ta'ālā during the Night of Ascension

(*Lailat-ul-mi'rāj*) is proved, as stated by certain learned persons, it would not negate this rule, because that conversation did not take place in this world, but in the Heavens. (Allah knows best)

The third method is mentioned in the verse as *أَوْ يُرْسِلَ رَسُولًا* "that He sends a messenger" (42:51). The messenger could be Jibra'īl عليه السلام or any other angel who may carry Allah Ta'ālā's message, and read it out to the prophet. And this has been the most common way. The whole of Glorious Qur'ān has been revealed in this fashion through angels. It should be noted that the word '*wahy*' has been explained above to mean infusion in mind or heart only, but this word is often used for all kinds of Divine discourses also, as narrated in a lengthy *ḥadīth* of Bukhārī where the message sent through an angel has also been termed as one kind of '*wahy*'. And there are two forms in which the angel carries the message. Sometimes he appears in his original form, and sometimes in the human form. (Allah knows best)

*مَا كُنْتُ تَدْرِي مَا الْكِتَابُ وَلَا الْإِيمَانُ وَلَكِنْ* (You did not know earlier what is the Book or what is 'Imān', but We have made it a light with which We guide whomsoever we will from among Our slaves - 42:52). This verse is a complement of the subject of the first verse. The gist is that in this world, nobody has ever seen, nor can ever see and converse face to face with Allah Ta'ālā. However, Allah Ta'ālā does send '*wahy*' to His chosen bondsmen in three ways described in the first verse. And in accordance with Allah Ta'ālā's practice, '*wahy*' is sent to the Holy Prophet ﷺ as well. The demand of Jews that Allah Ta'ālā should speak to him face to face is simply a display of ignorance and hostility. That is why Allah Ta'ālā has stated that whatever knowledge a man obtains, even a prophet for that matter, is all a grant of Allah Ta'ālā. Until Allah Ta'ālā tells them through '*wahy*', they would neither be aware of any Book nor would they know the details of faith. Unawareness of the Book before '*wahy*' is quite obvious; absence of knowledge of faith means that its details, rules and regulations, and its exalted place become known to a prophet after '*wahy*', not before it, otherwise it is proved with consensus of the ummah that whomever Allah chooses to make His Messenger or Prophet, He gives him faith and belief right from the beginning of his birth; his faith is engraved in his nature. These chosen people are firm believers, even before prophethood and before '*wahy*' is sent to them. Principles of belief become

a part of their nature and behaviour. That is why all the prophets were opposed by their people and they piled up all sorts of allegations against them, but no one had ever accused a prophet of idolatry, even before he was appointed as a prophet. Qurṭubī, in his Tafsīr, and Qāḍī 'Ayād in Shifā' have dealt with this subject in full detail.

**Alḥamdulillah  
the commentary on  
Sūrah Shūrā  
ends here.**